freedom.

A Book of Poems.

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I

They beat us in the open

They incarcerate us to teach us a lesson

They shoot us in the back

They shoot us because we are black

II

It doesn't matter if you're innocent
What matters is the color of your skin

It doesn't matter if you're fault free
What matters is your pedigree

III

Dead under 22

Is nothing new

Black and young

They beat us

Until we're numb

Shoot me in the back

Because I'm black

Justice ain't served

Your skin color gives you the nerve

IV

You can touch me

But I can't touch you

You can lie and cheat

But I can never have deceit

You're always right

I'm always wrong

You're white

But you love our song

V

That shit...

Bit me in the ass

I'm doing 15

Cause I was *seen*

I'm stuck in this cage

Don't matter my age

Don't matter if I'm right

Don't matter if I'm wrong

What matters is I'm black

My record is done

I ain't never gonna *know* my son

VI

Institutionalized

Right before our eyes

I thought slavery was over

What happened to what we fought for

Racism is still going strong

Being black is still *wrong*

VII

They fear us

Because of what society teaches

We fear them

Because of their privilege

VIII

The color of skin

Is the measurement of men

Coffee'd skin

Gets beaten

Ivory skin

Gets praised like heaven

IX

These tears I cry
Have felt some pain
In this cage
I'm pushed to insane

I barely stand
With thorough fear
Nail in my hands
Jesus are you here?

I see you pray
Through a crack
I can barely breathe
I'm in the sack

I can't hide now
Privacy gone
I'm with myself
Feeling forlorn

Are you there?
Can you hear me?
Are you there?
Fighting for me

The air brushes your face
But I can't breathe
You feel the wind
While I suffocate

When will I go
And where will I stay
Who will love me
And who will pray

Why did this happen
And how are you here
You're always there
And you're always near

The snow falls down
Like tears on my face
The snow falls down
Like my own condemned race

I'm losing it
I can't go on
I'm dying inside
My cause is gone

Why am I here
There is nothing left
Why am I here
Today I wept

Help me help me
I'm drifting away
I'm no one now
On my knees I pray

X

5 times stronger
Half a year longer
We aren't somber
We are stronger

5 months have gone by
We are here and alive
We look up to the sky
Into the ocean we dive

As five we stand
As a unit our strength is infinite like the sand
Covering us in His hand
He'll never forsake us
He has a plan

XI

Until it's taken away

You think little of it

XII

I was asleep, but now I'm awake

I was so still, but now I feel

I was numb, but now life has begun

XIII

I wait and pray

I wait throughout the day

I wait for His final say

I wait knowing it will be okay

I wait on my knees, I stay

I wait to know the right way

I wait for my mind to clear the gray

I wait

XIV

As tears roll down my face
I am trusting that the morning will come

As regret fills my face
I am trusting that the morning will come

As I sigh fearing I've shamed my race
I am trusting that the morning will come

As I'm accused because of my race
I am trusting that the morning will come

XV

"The man who is removed from society
She expected him to crumble, to go mad in his isolation

The man who is removed from society
She expected him to be filled with resentment and hatred at her, at God, at society
Little does she know that this man is stronger than the others
Little does she know that when she removed this man from society, he will rise, not fall

The man who is removed from society
Little does she know removing this man from society only makes him stronger, better than ever

The man who is removed from society

Little does she know removing this man from society will be the greatest thing she could ever do to this man

The man who is removed from society
Little does she know that by removing this man from society, she has given him a gift—a gift of enlightenment and a fresh start

The man who is removed from society
This man, coerced into seclusion, quickly recognizes just how surrounded he is

The man who is removed from society
For he recognizes he is truly not alone. In fact, his support system is amplified.
For he is not alone"

Princess-Diamonds J. Harris

XVI

Their skin color is their shield
Their skin color put us in the field

Their skin color puts them first
Our skin color leaves us with unquenchable thirst

Their skin color is what blinds them
Our skin color makes them find us

XVII

I weep myself to sleep tonight

I pray that God will hear my cry

My eyes are wet

My heart is heavy

I fear my life

Is gone from every

XVIII

On my knees I pray

Hear me God, I say

Hold me close

Don't let go

Storms are near

God stay here

Keep me warm

Prevent the harm

Protect me now

Show me how

XIX

God is gracious

God is kind

God is with me

All the time

God is here

God is near

God is with me everywhere

XX

Your inhibition is no coincidence

You were raised to never see innocence

You walk by with more fear

After each year and after each year

You claim you're not

Until you're caught

You don't even know

But your silent racism has an echo

XXI

All lives matter

But it's okay to say

Black Lives Matter, Too

XXII

As I come out the womb

The gun goes boom

I don't have a chance

My future is in *their* hands

XXIII

When challenges come

Wait

When life is pressing you down

Wait

When you're crying inside

Wait

When pain overtakes you

Wait

When addiction haunts you

Wait

When sin catches you

Wait

When all seems lost

Wait

When you don't count the cost

Wait

When you make a mistake

Wait

When you lose faith

Wait

When you don't know what'll happen

Wait

When you're about to give up

Wait

When you can't hear God

Wait

XXIV

Roses are red

But slavery is black

Why was this country built by my back?

Violets are blue

But skin color *ain't* new

Reparations were asked for

But nothing ensued

XXV

Let me take back

My one mistake

Instead of having you watch

My whole life break

XXVI

In pieces I came

In pieces I leave

Generational stuff

Has left me maim

XXVII

The hardest part
was seeing him sad

The hardest part
was seeing him get mad

The hardest part
was watching his dependency

The hardest part
was witnessing their indecency

The hardest part
was witnessing their codependence

The hardest part
was seeing he had no independence

The hardest part

was seeing them fall

The hardest part
was getting that call

The hardest part
was watching it all

The hardest part
was not catching the ball

XXVIII

All I see are clouds
On a sunny day

I'm always gone
far somewhere away

I look both ways
possibly too much

I think what my heart is carrying
is getting to be too tough

The fear almost lost me
but I found myself in time

God saved me
He showed me a sign

I think I found hope

when I thought all was lost

The sun came out
When I was surrounded by frost

XXIX

When you're angry
Channel it wisely

Don't sin in your rage
Become like a sage

Fight with your intelligence
Never with ignorance

Counter *their* hate
By creating your own fate

XXX

We are all meant to love and respect each other

But so few of us realize it